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Contact: Liza Marron 719-539-5606

U.S. SBA: Miguel Ayala (202) 450-0148

Internet Address: www.slvlocalfoods.org www.sba.gov/news

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SBA Boosts Economic Impact of Accelerators with \$4.4 Million in Prizes

WASHINGTON/ALAMOSA – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) today announced the 80 winners of the second annual Growth Accelerator Fund Competition. The San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition based in Alamosa Colorado is among the winners. The recipients represent 39 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Accelerators serve entrepreneurs in a broad set of industries and sectors – from manufacturing and tech start-ups, to farming and biotech – with many focused on creating a diverse and inclusive small business community.

“SBA is continuing to make advances in supporting unique organizations that help the start-up community grow, become commercially viable, and have a real and sustained economic impact,” said SBA Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet. “Through the wide-spread outreach of this competition, we are able to reach entrepreneurial ecosystems across the country. My commitment is to make our resources available to 21st century entrepreneurs where they are, and these accelerators, also known as incubators and innovation hubs, are the gathering place for today’s innovators and disruptors.”

The San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition (LFC) entered the national contest based on its work to foster an equitable local food system that restores the health of the people, community, economy and ecosystem. Two important business incubator projects were featured. The Valley Roots Food Hub local foods aggregation and distribution enterprise complete with a warehouse and large-scale commercial kitchen for value-added production in Mosca; And the 38-acres of amazing soil at the bend of the Rio that comprises the Rio Grande Healthy Living Park - recently obtained to nurture beginning farmers and to attract visitors for a back-to-the-land experience.

“The LFC is proud to say that it has created five full-time and four part-time well-paying jobs and is slated for five more in the coming years as well as incubating business entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector,” stated LFC Director Liza Marron. “We are thrilled to be chosen for this prestigious National Award that recognizes the LFC as a business incubator in the San Luis Valley.”

Applications were judged by more than 40 experts with entrepreneurial, investment, startup, economic development, capital formation and academic backgrounds from both the public and private sector. The first panel of judges reviewed over 400 applications and presentations and established a pool of 180 highly qualified finalists. The second panel evaluated the finalists’ presentations and pitch videos and selected the 80 winners.

Each organization will receive a cash prize of \$50,000 from the SBA. In accepting these funds, the accelerators will also be committing to quarterly reporting for one year. They will be required to report metrics such as jobs

created, funds raised, startups launched and corporate sponsors obtained. This will allow the SBA to continue building upon its database of accelerators and their impact, and to develop long-term relationships with the startups and constituents in these innovative and entrepreneurial communities.

The purpose of the competition was to draw attention and funding to parts of the country where there are gaps in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. While there are entrepreneurial activities occurring nationwide, some are better supported by private sector ecosystems than others. SBA has created connective tissue amongst the nearly 130 winning entrepreneurial ecosystems now part of the Growth Accelerator Fund. We will continue to explore ways to creatively harness this powerful network and connect startups to each other and Federal government resources. We reported to Congress a baseline of 2014's fifty winners – made up of about 1,500 companies that have raised \$600 million and employ nearly 5,000 people – and with the Class of 2015 the number of entrepreneurs we touch grows significantly.

Additionally, SBA's Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA) used the Growth Accelerator Fund Competition's framework to award an additional \$400,000 to ecosystems primarily dedicated to Native American entrepreneurs and small businesses. Criteria used for these eight \$50,000 prizes were determined by the ONAA, which also managed and judged these eight selections.

The SBA discussed the Growth Accelerator program and other SBA programs at the [White House Demo Day](#) on Tuesday. Watch <https://www.whitehouse.gov/demo-day> and check out www.sba.gov/accelerators for more details. #SBA Accelerates on Twitter. www.slvlocalfoods.org

The winners are listed below:

Growth Accelerators		
City	State	Name of Accelerator
Anchorage	AK	Launch : Alaska
Homer	AK	Alaska Small Business Incubator, LLC
Birmingham	AL	Velocity
Fayetteville	AR	Startup Junkie Consulting, 2.7.0 Accelerator
Phoenix	AZ	CPLC Pickle House
Phoenix	AZ	SEED SPOT
La Jolla	CA	mystartupXX, University of California San Diego
Los Angeles	CA	LACI (Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator)
Oakland	CA	Impact Hub Oakland
San Diego	CA	Hera Labs
San Jose	CA	Manos Accelerator
Alamosa	CO	San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition
Boulder	CO	Unreasonable Institute
Boulder	CO	MergeLane
Loveland	CO	The Warehouse Business Accelerator
Hartford	CT	LaunchPad for Impact
Washington	DC	Halcyon Incubator
Washington	DC	Launch Pad

Washington	DC	Mess Hall
Fort Pierce	FL	Pioneer Business Incubator
Orlando	FL	VentureScaleUp
Tampa	FL	FirstWaVE Accelerator
Atlanta	GA	FOCUS Incubator
Rome	GA	Makervillage
Honolulu	HI	XLR8UH
Kahului	HI	Maui Food Innovation Center - Maui Accelerator Program
Kailua-Kona	HI	GVS Transmedia Accelerator
Cedar Rapids	IA	Entrepreneurial Development Center, Inc.
Cedar Rapids	IA	Iowa Startup Accelerator
Champaign	IL	I-Start (EnterpriseWorks at the UIUC Research Park)
Chicago	IL	Fulton-Carroll Center
Chicago	IL	Impact Engine
Park Forest	IL	SouthWorks MakerLab in Park Forest
Anderson	IN	Flagship Accelerator Program
Louisville	KY	XLerateHealth
Louisville	KY	LVL1 Inc.
New Orleans	LA	PowerMoves.NOLA
New Orleans	LA	Propeller: A Force for Social Innovation
New Orleans	LA	The Idea Village
Boston	MA	Fraunhofer TechBridge
Boston	MA	InciteHealth
Somerville	MA	Greentown Labs
Rockville	MD	Relevant Health
Portland	ME	E2Tech - Environmental & Energy Technology Council of Maine
Portland	ME	Maine Center for Entrepreneurial Development (MCED)
Battle Creek	MI	Inge's Place
Detroit	MI	NextEnergy
St. Louis	MO	Prosper Startup Accelerator
Bozeman	MT	406 Labs
Charlotte	NC	RevTech Labs & QC FinTech
Research Triangle Park	NC	First Flight Venture Center
Omaha	NE	Year of the Startup
Keene	NH	Hannah Grimes Center
Ironia	NJ	Great Turning Advisors Social Business Accelerator
Albuquerque	NM	Creative Startups Accelerator
Albuquerque	NM	Native Entrepreneur in Residence Program
Brooklyn	NY	Manufacture New York
Ithaca	NY	Passenger to Pilot: Empowering Women Entrepreneurs
Long Island City	NY	Coalition for Queens (C4Q)
New York	NY	KiiLN – Keystone for Incubating Innovation in Life Sciences Network

New York	NY	Minority Venture Partners (MVP) Accelerator
Cincinnati	OH	First Batch
Cleveland	OH	VictoryStart
Medford	OR	Sustainable Valley Technology Group
Portland	OR	Oregon BEST StartSpace
Portland	OR	ONABEN
Philadelphia	PA	University City Science Center Digital Health Accelerator
Reading	PA	IDEA Food Accelerator
San Juan	PR	EnterPRize Accelerator
San Juan	PR	Codetrotters Academy / Accelerator
Providence	RI	Social Enterprise Greenhouse Accelerator
Charleston	SC	Local Works
Greenville	SC	Greenville Chamber Minority Business Accelerator Program
North Charleston	SC	Fresh Future Farm Inc.
Chattanooga	TN	CO.LAB (The Company Lab)
Memphis	TN	ZeroTo510
Memphis	TN	Start Co. Integration Accelerator
Dallas	TX	EMERGE powered by Tech Wildcatters
El Paso	TX	RedSky
San Antonio	TX	Live Work Unit Accelerator
Salt Lake City	UT	Sustainable Startups
Arlington	VA	Eastern Foundry
Hampton	VA	Peninsula Technology Incubator
Richmond	VA	Lighthouse
Vienna	VA	Equita
Spokane	WA	Ignite Northwest
Milwaukee	WI	WERCBench Labs
Beckley	WV	West Virginia Hive

Office of Native American Affairs Special Prizes		
City	State	Name of Accelerator
Anchorage	AK	Launch:Alaska
Fayetteville	AR	The ARK Challenge
Kahului	HI	Maui Food Innovation Center – Maui Accelerator Program
Albuquerque	NM	Native Entrepreneur in Residence Program
Charleston	SC	Fresh Future Farm Inc.
Fort Pierce	FL	Pioneer Business Incubator
Portland	OR	ONABEN
Homer	AK	Alaska Small Business Incubator, LLC